

## **RECREATIONAL THERAPIST**

### **DEFINITION:**

Under general direction, to implement therapeutic recreation activities of average difficulty for clients, residents, patients and/or inmates in mental health, geriatric, rehabilitation and/or detention facilities, and to perform related work.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

All positions in this class are found in the Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), and the Sheriff's Department. Incumbents in this class plan, carry out, and assess a variety of recreational therapy activities. This class differs from the next higher-level class, Recreation Therapy Supervisor, in that the latter has first or second line supervisory responsibilities and performs administrative duties. Recreational Therapist differs from the next lower level class, Recreation Therapy Aide, in that the latter are not certified professionals and incumbents perform duties under the immediate supervision of a Recreational Therapist.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

Plans, carries out and assesses recreational activities for residents, patients, clients and/or inmates in 24-hour residential settings that include closed wards, open wards, and/or County Jail; motivates and organizes client, patient and/or inmate groups into recreational therapy activities, musical activities or dramatic presentations, arts, crafts, sports, field trips, and social activities; evaluates the needs and interests of individual residents, patients, clients and/or inmates and assists and encourages them in selecting and participating in leisure recreational activities; participates in staff conferences for patient, client and/or inmate assessment; contributes observations of residents/patients relative to inmates and/or clients' attitudes, social adjustment, and general progress; performs initial assessments and counseling of clients, residents, patients and/or inmates; arranges for transportation of residents, patients, clients and/or inmates to and from recreation activities; charts clients, residents, patients and/or inmates progress and goals; maintains files on cases; purchases recreation supplies and materials; maintains work areas; and may supervise and/or train interns, trainees and/or volunteers.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

#### **Thorough Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of recreation therapy.
- Wide range of therapeutic activities for recreation, entertainment and athletics.
- Group dynamics and individual behavior in a mental health, geriatric, rehabilitation and/or detention setting.
- The aging process.

#### **General Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of supervision and training.

**Skills to:**

- Communicate effectively orally or in writing for instructing, counseling and leading activities.
- Work with clients/inmates and/or residents/patients who have difficulty in controlling their behavior.
- Exercise leadership in working with groups of clients/inmates and/or residents/patients.
- Establish Interpersonal relations in encouraging client, patient and/or inmate participation in activities and in dealing with clients, patients and/or inmates with emotional and behavioral problems.
- Drive a van or bus.

**EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:**

Education, training and/or experience which would likely demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities stated above. A bachelor's degree in Recreation Therapy or Music Therapy is required. Experience in planning and administering recreation therapy to mental health and geriatric patients and in supervision and training is highly desirable but not required.

**SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSE OR REQUIREMENTS:****Certification:**

Candidates must be certified or be eligible for certification as a Registered Recreator with the California Board of Parks and Recreation Certification, or the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification, in accordance with the California Administrative Code, Title 22, Section 71053(17). Certification with either CBPRC or NCTRC will be required by the end of the probationary period.

For some positions, a certification by the National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT) or by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT) will be qualifying.

**License:**

In some positions, a valid Class B California Driver's License is required within six (6) months of employment in order to operate a van or bus for field trips.

**Character:**

Applicants must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Felony convictions, depending on number and recency, may be disqualifying. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation which may include a polygraph examination.

**Working Conditions:**

Incumbents are exposed to clients, inmates, residents, and/or patients who may become abusive or combative or who may have a contagious disease. Deputy Sheriffs provide security in the County Jail.